

**PIANO AND SONG. HOW TO
TEACH, HOW TO LEARN, AND
HOW TO FORM A JUDGMENT
OF MUSICAL PERFORMANCES**

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Piano and song. How to teach, how to learn, and how to form a judgment of musical performances by Friedrich Wieck & Mary P. Nichols

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FRIEDRICH WIECK & MARY P. NICHOLS

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HOW TO TEACH, HOW TO LEARN, AND
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MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

BY
FRIEDRICH WIECK

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY
MARY P. NICHOLS



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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

FRIEDRICH WIECK, the author of the work a translation of which is here offered to the public, was during his long life a distinguished teacher of music. He died in the autumn of 1873. He was the father and teacher of the celebrated pianist, Clara Wieck, now Fr. Dr. Clara Schumann, widow of the renowned composer Robert Schumann, who was also a pupil of Wieck. His second daughter, Fräulein Marie Wieck, is well known in Germany as an artistic performer on the piano-forte.

I have translated this little book, with the belief that a knowledge of the author's views will be no less valuable in America than in his own country; and with the hope that it may find readers who will be glad to receive the suggestions of so experienced a teacher.

In illustration of his method, in addition to the two Etudes, already published by F. Whistling, Leipzig, a number of piano exercises, &c., selected

from the literary remains of Wieck, by his daughter Marie Wieck and his pupil Louis Grosse, are, it is said, about to be published.

I have omitted in the translation a few portions on the composition and management of the opera, on the giving of concerts, and on the construction of the piano, thinking that they would be of little interest or practical value to the general public.

MARY P. NICHOLS.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

I HERE present to the musical public a book written in a style of my own, not a scientific and systematically well-arranged treatise. This no reasonable man would expect of an old music-master, who, in his long practice in the realm of tones, could not arrive at learned and too often fruitless deductions. Nature made me susceptible to that which is good and beautiful; a correct instinct and a tolerable understanding have taught me to avoid the false and the vicious; a desire for increased knowledge has led me to observe carefully whatever I met with in my path in life; and I may say, without hesitation, that I have endeavored, according to my ability, to fill the position to which I have been called. This is no vain boast, but only the justifiable assertion of a good conscience; and this no man needs to withhold. For these reasons, I have been unwilling to refrain from giving to the world a true expression of my opinions and feelings. I trust they will

meet with a few sympathizing spirits who are willing to understand my aims ; but I shall be still more happy if, here and there, a music-teacher will adopt the views here set forth, at the same time carefully and thoughtfully supplying many things which it did not enter into my plan to explain more in detail. Abundant material lay spread out before me, and even increased upon my hands while I was writing. Art is indeed so comprehensive, and every thing in life is so closely connected with it, that whoever loves and fosters it will daily find in it new sources of enjoyment and new incitements to study. The most experienced teacher of art must be a constant learner.

I have always held and still hold the opinions advanced in this work, and I have neglected no opportunity to impress them upon my pupils.

I may be allowed to mention here, with some satisfaction, my daughters Clara and Marie ; and, among numerous other pupils, I speak with equal pleasure of the estimable Herr Waldemar Heller, of Dresden, and Prof. E. F. Wenzel, of Leipzig. I have always enjoyed their affection and gratitude, and I feel a pride that they continue to defend and to teach the principles which they have received from me.

This is not the first time that I have appeared as an author. The "Signale für die musikalische

Welt," as well as the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik," have published numerous essays from my pen under various titles. The approval which they met with, at the time of their appearance, has induced me to undertake this larger work. Several of those earlier writings are included in this book, but in a partially altered form. The frequently recurring character, the teacher Dominie, originated with these essays; I need hardly say that he represents my humble self. Those who are otherwise unacquainted with me will through him understand my character, and will moreover see that a man of such caustic brevity can be, by no means, a master of polished style. May this last acknowledgment appease all those critics whose hair is made to stand on end by my inelegant mode of writing. I will make no further apology for my style. I have often availed myself of the dialogue form, because it was conducive to brevity; not less frequently I have made use of the form of the epistle and of personal discourse, as being more congenial to my individual manner than that of a serious treatise. I have also undertaken to say something about singing! A piano-teacher, if he is possessed of mind and talent, as I suppose him to be, whether he teaches the elements or occupies himself with more advanced instruction, should understand the art of singing; he, at least, should show a warm

interest in it, and should have an earnest love for it. When I speak in general of singing, I refer to that species of singing which is a form of beauty, and which is the foundation for the most refined and most perfect interpretation of music; and, above all things, I consider the culture of beautiful tones the basis for the finest possible touch upon the piano. In many respects, the piano and singing should explain and supplement each other. They should mutually assist in expressing the sublime and the noble, in forms of unclouded beauty. My book will make this evident to many; but whether it will succeed with all, I doubt. Not a few will even be found who will lay aside my book with contempt, and who will scorn the zeal of the "man of the past age." I am quite prepared for this: it is the fashion at present to undervalue the old times and their defenders; but I shall continue to be conservative, until the "men of the future" shall be able to show me results which shall excel those of the past, or at least shall equal them.

And now I commend my little book to the public, trusting that it will instruct the willing, correct the erring, incite the indolent, and chastise those who wilfully persist in the wrong.

THE AUTHOR.